

UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT



# **Accessions, Separations, and Pay Periods for the Executive Branch**

## **Brief Summary**

## **Calendar Year 2013**

**August 2013**

*a New Day for Federal Service*

# Accessions, Separations, and Pay Periods for the Executive Branch

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Calendar Year 2012

This document provides a brief summary of Accessions, Separations and Pay Periods for the Executive Branch of the Federal Government.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management  
Planning and Policy Analysis  
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## Purpose

This document presents an overview of Accessions, Separations and Pay Periods for the Executive Branch of the Federal Government, providing the public and analysts access to commonly requested information about the Federal Workforce.

This document presents basic data, in the form of tables and graphs, on Accessions, Separations and Pay Period information for the Executive Branch of the Federal Government.

## Coverage

Often, OPM coverage is equated to the Federal Executive civilian workforce. The coverage is in fact exclusively Federal and exclusively civilian, but the data exclude a few major components of the Executive Branch (most notably the Postal Service and many intelligence agencies) and include some pieces of the Legislative Branch. For specific exclusions and inclusions, visit FedData on the OPM's website: <http://www.opm.gov/feddata/html/sdminfo.asp>. OPM data also do not include contractors and contract employees

## Important Information about the Data

Each Federal employee has a particular work schedule, type of appointment, tenure, and appointment authority, among other variables, which dictate the “type” of his or her employment. These variables have many levels and definitions. Collectively, however, they lead to six types of employment. This paper examines two types of employment: Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) Employees, and all other employees.

Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP): this category includes employees working a standard work week year round with no absolute end date. Non-seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employees make up the majority of the Federal workforce, over 87%.

The Other employment category rolls up all other employment types, and makes up about 12% of the Federal workforce. This category includes part time, seasonal, and non-permanent employees.

Most of the data in this paper relates to Pay Periods. A Pay Period is a two week period that begins on a Sunday and ends on a Saturday. There are usually 26 pay periods in the calendar year.

## Data

This section presents basic data, in the form of tables and graphs, on Accessions, Separations and Pay Period information for the Executive Branch of the Federal Government.

**Table 1. Federal Executive Branch Average Accessions by Day of a Pay Period**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

Day of Pay Period	Average Accessions NSFTP	Average Accessions OTHER
Sunday	2,274	2,369
Monday	1,276	948
Tuesday	296	307
Wednesday	9	63
Thursday	5	49
Friday	8	35
Saturday	1	9
Sunday	14	85
Monday	108	336
Tuesday	19	119
Wednesday	4	43
Thursday	4	31
Friday	5	25
Saturday	3	7

Table 1 shows the average number of accessions by the day of the week in a pay period for calendar year 2012. It is clear that the bulk of accessions occur at the beginning of a pay period. This is because the human resources department typically gives a start date for newly hired employees, which is typically set at the beginning of a pay period.

**Table 2. Federal Executive Branch Pay Periods Starts by Month**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Years 2010 - 2012

MONTH	2012	2011	2010
January	<b>3</b>	2	<b>3</b>
February	2	2	2
March	2	2	2
April	2	2	2
May	2	<b>3</b>	2
June	2	2	2
July	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	2
August	2	2	<b>3</b>
September	2	2	2
October	2	2	2
November	2	2	2
December	<b>3</b>	2	2

Table 2 shows the number of pay periods that started in a month for the last three calendar years. Most months have two pay periods that begin in it. It is not uncommon for a month to have three beginnings to a pay period, they are highlighted and bolded in the table above. This is important to note because when analyzing accessions by month from year to year accessions can look drastically different depending on how many pay periods have begun in that month. Since most people are hired at the beginning of a pay period months with three pay periods beginning in them are going to have more accessions.

**Table 3. Federal Executive Branch Accessions by Month**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

MONTH	NSFTP	OTHER	TOTAL
January	9,487	8,574	18,061
February	6,487	6,052	12,539
March	6,874	8,746	15,620
April	7,300	10,783	18,083
May	8,065	19,829	27,894
June	8,928	18,167	27,095
July	13,234	12,024	25,258
August	9,902	7,063	16,965
September	11,327	6,670	17,997
October	8,784	6,710	15,494
November	7,896	6,561	14,457
December	9,905	7,254	17,159
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>108,189</b>	<b>118,433</b>	<b>226,622</b>

Table 3 shows the number of accessions by month for calendar years 2012. There are slightly larger numbers when looking at the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employee population for the three months, highlighted in yellow, that had three pay periods begin in them. Once again this is because the majority of people are hired at the beginning of a pay period. Starting in May there is a clear spike in accessions for the OTHER category of employment, lasting until July. This is caused by the seasonal hiring of summer time employees such as forest rangers and other natural resource management employees.

**Figure 1. Federal Executive Branch Accessions by Month**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

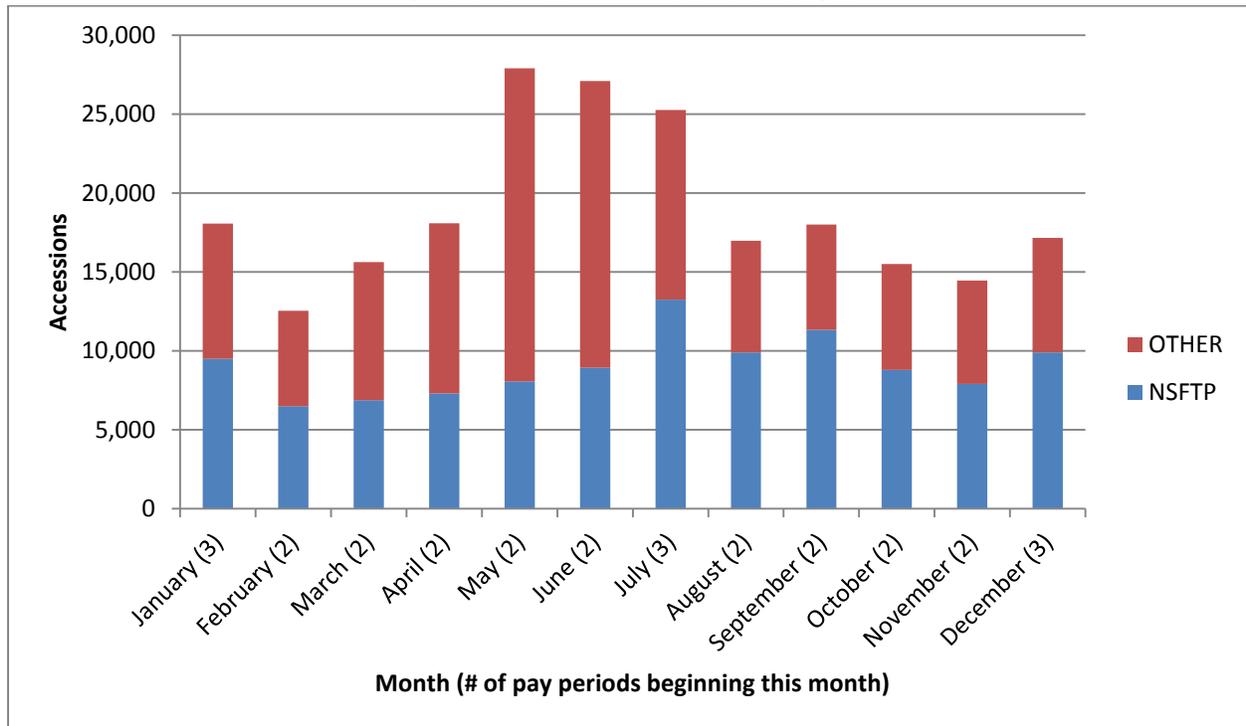


Figure 1 is a graphical representation of table 3. Figure 1 shows the number of accessions by month for calendar years 2012. The number of pay periods that begin in a particular month is the number in parentheses. Again, there are slightly larger numbers when looking at the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employee population for the three months that had three pay periods begin in them. Once again this is because the majority of people are hired at the beginning of a pay period. Again, starting in May there is a clear spike in

accessions for the OTHER category of employment, lasting until July. This is caused by the seasonal hiring of summer time employees such as forest rangers and other natural resource management employees.

**Figure 2. Federal Executive Branch Accessions by Pay Period**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

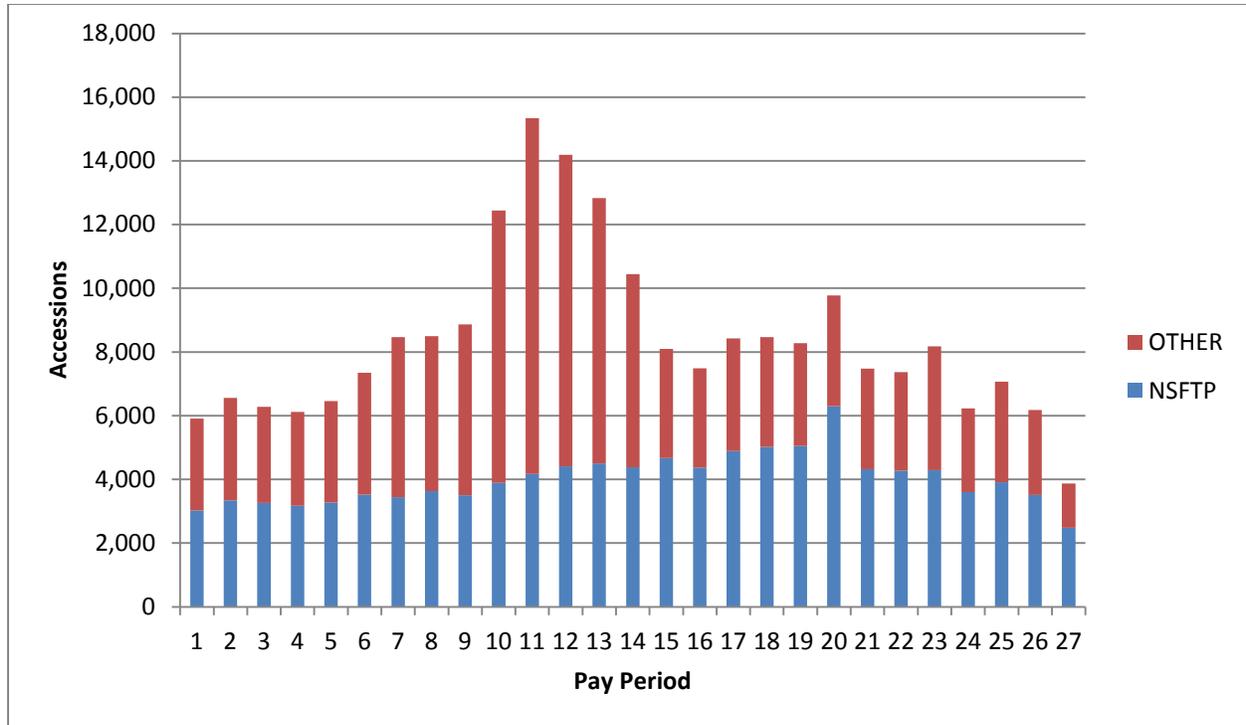


Figure 2 shows the number of accessions by pay period for calendar year 2012. When looking at the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employee population you can see that accessions remain relatively stable throughout the year. At pay period ten, which occurs in May, there is a clear spike in accessions for the OTHER category of employment, lasting until pay period fourteen. This is caused by the seasonal hiring of summer time employees such as forest rangers and other natural resource management employees.

**Table 4. Federal Executive Branch Average Separations by Day of a Pay Period**  
 Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

Day of Pay Period	Average Separations NSFTP	Average Separations OTHER
Sunday	135	163
Monday	349	233
Tuesday	275	194
Wednesday	175	182
Thursday	119	203
Friday	518	455
Saturday	219	204
Sunday	165	209
Monday	299	140
Tuesday	127	127
Wednesday	170	139
Thursday	214	206
Friday	638	551
Saturday	1,463	988

Table 4 shows the average number of Separations by the day of the week in a pay period for Calendar year 2012. Separations mostly occur at the end of a pay period. Separations and the end of the pay period are not as strongly related as accessions and the beginning of the pay period, but still greatly related. Many types of separations are not left up to the human resources department to decide. For retiring employees there may be advantages to working until the end of a month, even if the end of a month occurs in the middle or beginning of a pay period. For many of the employees in the other category of employment, part time, seasonal, and non-permanent employees, there is a strict amount of time they are hired for. Once that limit is reached they must separate, even if it occurs in the middle or beginning of a pay period. Generally speaking most separations occur at the end of a pay period.

**Table 5. Federal Executive Branch Pay Periods Ends by Month**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Years 2010 - 2012

MONTH	2012	2011	2010
January	2	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
February	2	2	2
March	2	2	2
April	2	2	2
May	2	2	2
June	<b>3</b>	2	2
July	2	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>
August	2	2	2
September	2	2	2
October	2	2	2
November	2	2	2
December	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	2

Table 5 shows the number of pay periods that ended in a month for the last three calendar years. Most months have two pay periods that end in it. It is not uncommon for a month to have three endings to a pay period, they are highlighted and bolded in the table above. This is important to note because when analyzing separations by month from year to year separations can look drastically different depending on how many pay periods have ended in that month. Since most people separate at the ending of a pay period months with three pay periods ending in them are going to have more separations.

**Table 6. Federal Executive Branch Separations by Month**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

MONTH	NSFTP	OTHER	TOTAL
January	8,718	6,585	15,303
February	7,466	4,554	12,020
March	9,898	6,839	16,737
April	10,856	6,686	17,542
May	9,098	8,081	17,179
<b>June</b>	<b>14,830</b>	<b>8,767</b>	<b>23,597</b>
July	9,413	7,456	16,869
August	11,178	16,254	27,432
September	11,530	14,717	26,247
October	8,516	8,944	17,460
November	8,641	7,680	16,321
<b>December</b>	<b>16,807</b>	<b>7,592</b>	<b>24,399</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>126,951</b>	<b>104,155</b>	<b>231,106</b>

Table 6 shows the number of separations by month for calendar years 2012. There are slightly larger numbers when looking at the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employee population for the two highlighted months that had three pay periods end in them, June and December. Once again this is because the majority of people separate at the end of a pay period. In August and September there is a clear spike in separations for the OTHER category of employment. This is caused by the seasonal separations of summer time employees such as forest rangers and other natural resource management employees.

**Figure 3. Federal Executive Branch Separations by Month**  
Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

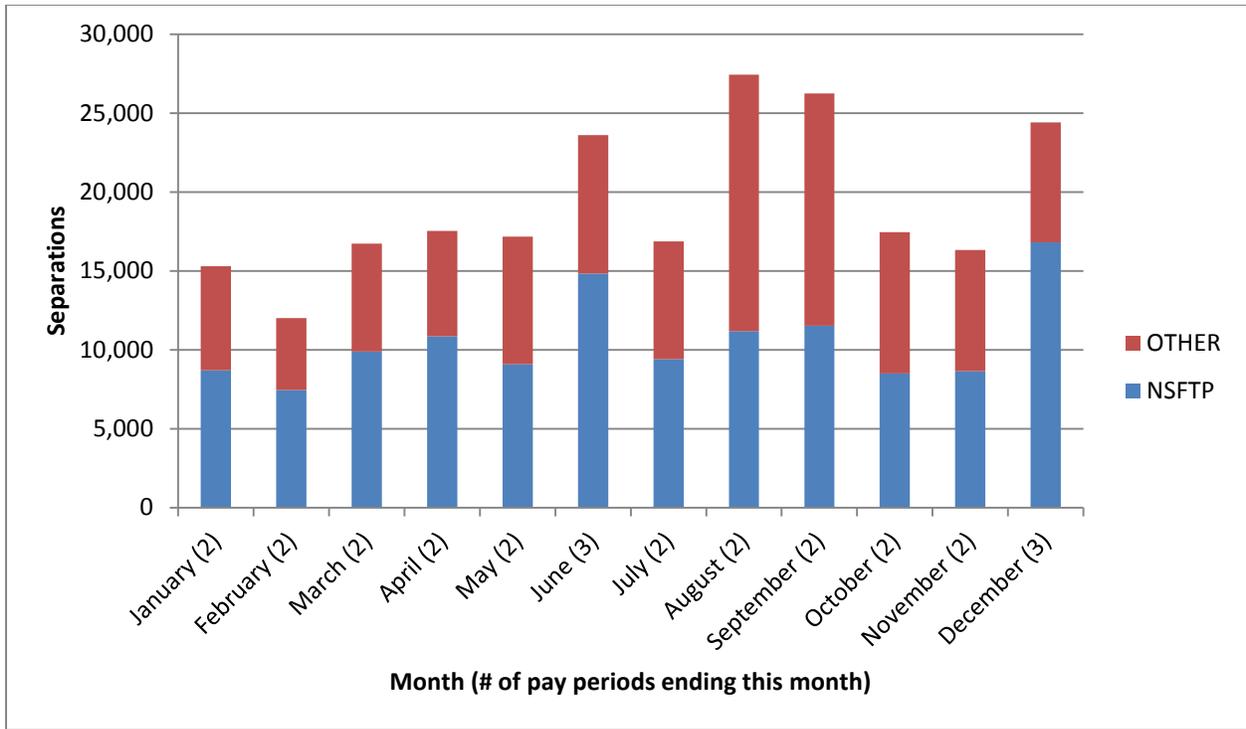


Figure 3 is a graphical representation of table 6. Figure 3 shows the number of separations by month for calendar years 2012. The number of pay periods that end in a particular month is the number in parentheses. Again, there are slightly larger numbers when looking at the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employee population for the two months that had three pay periods end in them. Once again this is because the majority of people separate at the end of a pay period. In August and September there is a clear spike in separations for the OTHER category of employment. This is caused by the seasonal separations of summer time employees such as forest rangers and other natural resource management employees.

**Figure 4. Federal Executive Branch Separations by Pay Period**

Statistics restricted to Calendar Year 2012

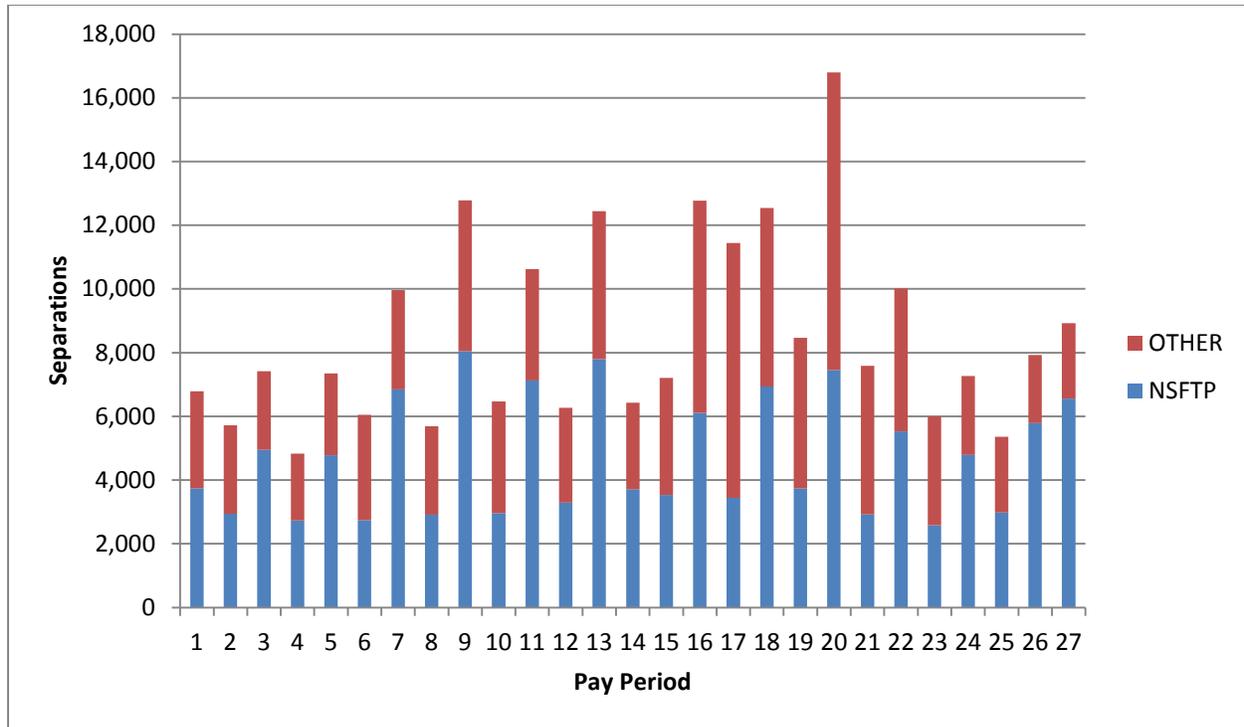


Figure 4 shows the number of separations by the pay period for calendar year 2012. When looking at separations for the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employment category you will notice that they seem to alternate between high and low every other pay period. This is because the pay periods with the high number of NSFTP separations contain the end of a month. Many People retire at the end of a month because of the way the annuitant policy works.

## Conclusion

Accessions occur at the beginning of a pay period. This is because the human resources department typically gives a start date for newly hired employees, which occurs at the beginning of a pay period. This can be seen clearly in table 1. Many spikes in accessions are caused by seasonal hiring and are not part of the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employee population which remains relatively stable. This can be seen in figure 2.

Separations mostly occur at the end of a pay period. Separations and the end of the pay period are not as strongly related as accessions and the beginning of the pay period. Many types of separations are not left up to the human resources department to decide, depending on the type of separation. This can be seen in table 4. When looking at separations for the Non-Seasonal Full-Time Permanent (NSFTP) employee population you will notice that they seem to alternate between high and low every other pay period. This is because the pay periods with the high number of NSFTP separations contain the end of a month. Many People retire at the end of a month because of the way the annuitant policy works. This can be seen in figure 4.

Most months have two pay periods that start and end in them. It is not uncommon for a month to have either three starts to a pay period or three ends to a pay period. This is important because when analyzing data by

month accessions and separations can look different depending on how many pay periods have started or ended in that month. This can be seen in tables 2 and 5 and figures 1 and 3.

## **Additional Details**

For any data requests, the OPM produces an online data tool, FedScope, which is updated quarterly: <http://www.fedscope.opm.gov/>. Some of the Statistics above can be replicated in FedScope, with the option for much more detail. The tool is best operated in Internet Explorer. For all other inquiries, contact DAG through FedStats at [FedStats@opm.gov](mailto:FedStats@opm.gov).



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